THE TOTALLY AWESOME HULK® 7

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THE TOTALLY AWESOME HULK
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CIVIL WAR II

THE TOTALLY AWESOME HULK

MONTHS AGO, OFF THE KENYAN COAST, AN EXPERIMENTAL FUSION REACTOR HAD FAILED AND THREATENED THE LIVES OF FIFTY MILLION PEOPLE. BRUCE BANNER, AS THE HULK, STOPPED THE MELTDOWN BY PHYSICALLY ABSORBING THE RADIATION. ALTHOUGH HE WAS ABLE TO STOP THE THREAT, THE HULK'S PHYSIOLOGY COULDN'T HANDLE ALL THAT ENERGY, AND CAME CLOSE TO A MELTDOWN OF HIS OWN.

AMADEUS CHO ARRIVED AND AGAINST TONY STARK'S ORDERS, ABSORBED ALL OF BRUCE'S RADIATION. AS A RESULT, AMADEUS IS NOW THE TOTALLY AWESOME HULK, AND BRUCE HASN'T BEEN SEEN SINCE THAT DAY...

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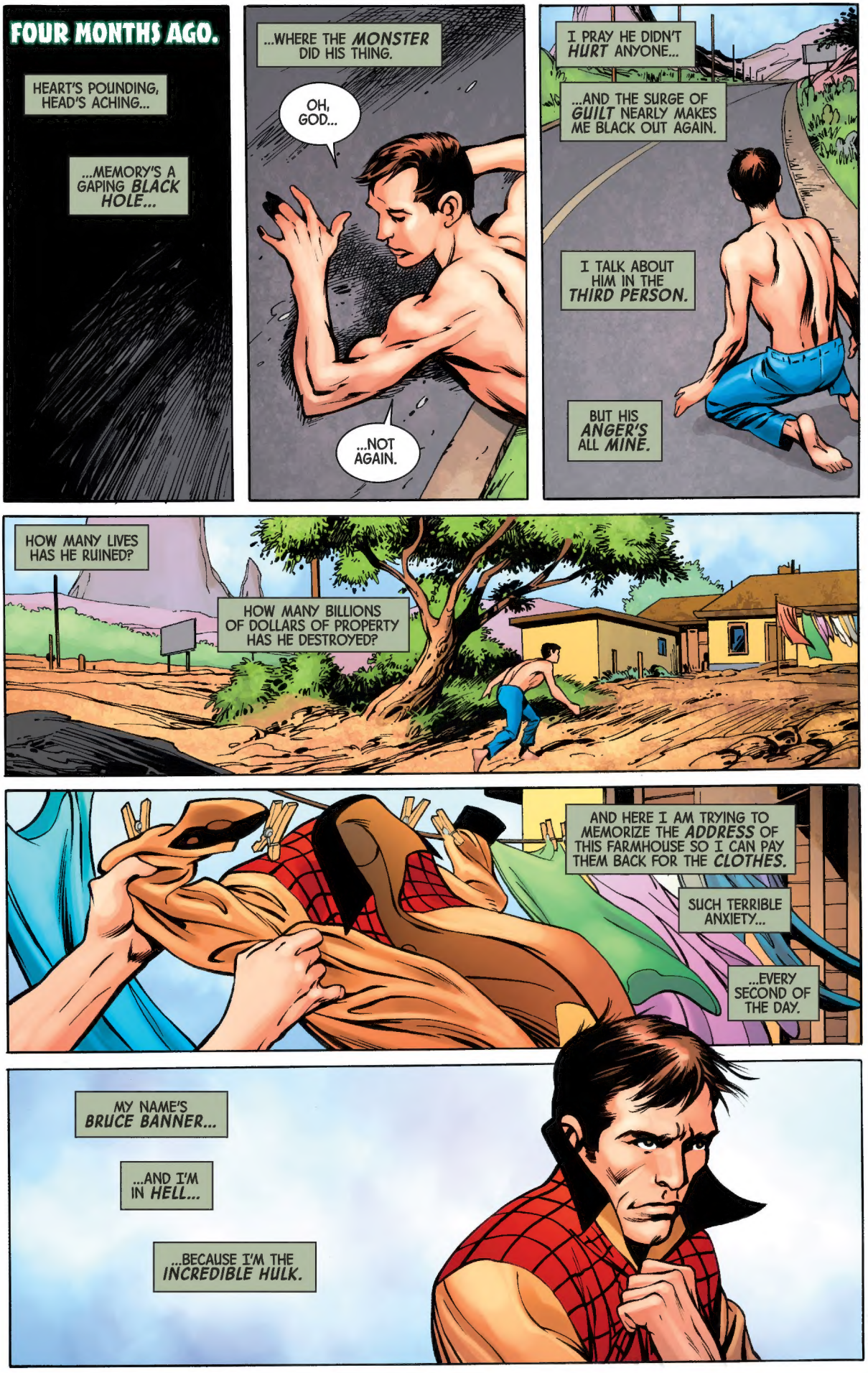

FOUR MONTHS AGO.
HEART'S POUNDING, HEAD'S ACHING...
...MEMORY'S A GAPING BLACK HOLE...
...WHERE THE MONSTER DID HIS THING.
OH, GOD...
...NOT AGAIN.
I PRAY HE DIDN'T HURT ANYONE...
...AND THE SURGE OF GUILT NEARLY MAKES ME BLACK OUT AGAIN.
I TALK ABOUT HIM IN THE THIRD PERSON.
BUT HIS ANGER'S ALL MINE.
HOW MANY LIVES HAS HE RUINED?
HOW MANY BILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF PROPERTY HAS HE DESTROYED?
AND HERE I AM TRYING TO MEMORIZE THE ADDRESS OF THIS FARMHOUSE SO I CAN PAY THEM BACK FOR THE CLOTHES.
SUCH TERRIBLE ANXIETY...
...EVERY SECOND OF THE DAY.
MY NAME'S BRUCE BANNER...
...AND I'M IN HELL...
...BECAUSE I'M THE INCREDIBLE HULK.

UH... SORRY...
...YOU WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO HAVE A PHONE I COULD BORROW?
LAST CALL BAR
THAT'LL BE A QUARTER.
YOU... AH...
...WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO HAVE A QUARTER I COULD BORROW?
HUNH!
WHO IS THAT BUM?
HEY...
...THAT'S MY SHIRT!
RIGHT! SO SORRY!
349 POST OAK ROAD, RIGHT? I WAS GONNA SEND YOU A CHECK--
YOU DIRTY THIEF!
UKK!
KRAAK
COME ON! GET UP!
NO NO NO NO--
SAME DAMN THING.
YEAR AFTER YEAR AFTER YEAR...

...THAT TERRIBLE ANGER SURGES...
I SAID GET UP!
...AND I FIGHT IT WITH EVERYTHING I HAVE...
GET UP OR I SWEAR--
AAAAAGH!
...BUT I KNOW THERE'S NOTHING THAT CAN STOP--
HUH?
WHA...
HA.

HA HA HA HA HA!
WHERE THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?
IT'S ALL RIGHT, IT'S ALL RIGHT--
--I'M BRUCE BANNER!
THE HULK! BUT NOW--
THE HULK?
ALL I SEE IS A DIRTBALL THIEF!
MAYBE YOU SHOULD LOOK A LITTLE HARDER.
OH MY GOD...
...AMADEUS?
PRETTY AWESOME, HUH?

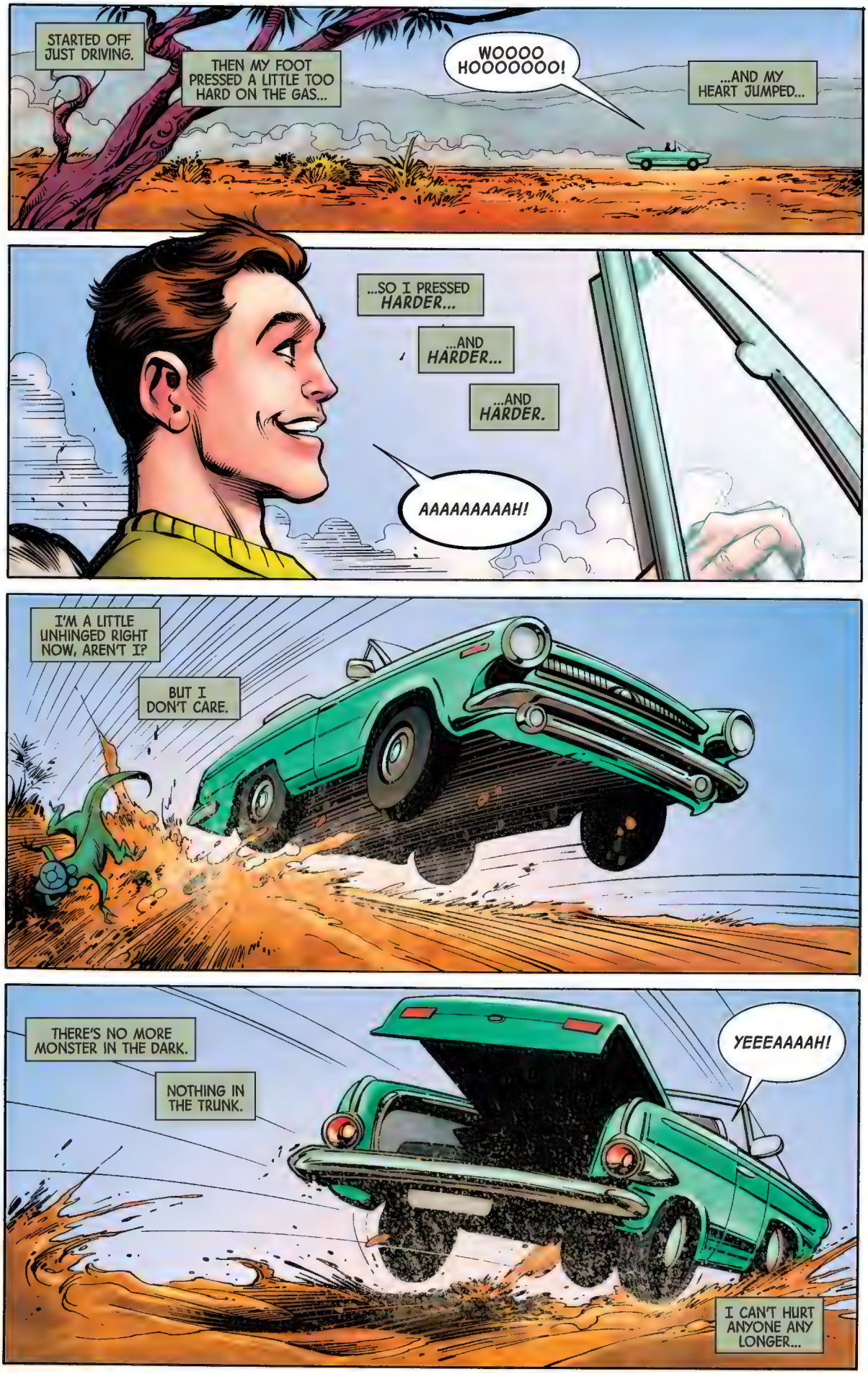
THE MOJAVE DESERT.
WHAT-- WHAT-- WHAT--
--WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?
HA HA!
I CURED YOU, BUDDY!
AND NOW I'M THE HULK!
CHECK ME OUT!
WHA...
YOU'RE WELCOME!
NOW COME ON. THIS IS ONE OF YOUR OLD HIDEOUTS. YOU GOT SOME COFFEE DOWN HERE SOMEWHERE, RIGHT?
WAIT, AMADEUS. THIS DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE. I'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIND A CURE FOR YEARS--
--AND I FINISHED THE JOB.
WAIT!
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?
DON'T YOU REMEMBER?
IT STARTED THE WAY IT ALWAYS DOES, DUDE...

"...WITH YOU BEING A HERO...
"...JUMPING INTO FREDERICK KIBER'S COLLAPSING NUCLEAR FUSION FACILITY OFF THE COAST OF KENYA...
"...IN ORDER TO ABSORB THE RADIATION THAT WAS ABOUT TO KILL MILLIONS OF PEOPLE.
"(IT WAS AWESOME, DUDE. TONY STARK WAS ALL LIKE, 'IT'S TOO MUCH, BRUCE'...)
"(...AND YOU WERE ALL LIKE, 'IF YOU DIDN'T WANT TOO MUCH YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE CALLED THE HULK.')
"(BOSS.)
"BUUUT...
"...THE KIBER FUSION ENERGY REACTED WITH YOUR GAMMA RADIATION IN WAYS NO ONE PREDICTED...
"...AND SUDDENLY YOU WERE THE MELTDOWN THAT WAS ABOUT TO KILL MILLIONS OF PEOPLE.
"THE BIG BRAINS GOT TOGETHER.
"TONY STARK. MONICA RAPPACCINI. T'CHALLA.
"AND AFTER TRYING EVERYTHING THEY COULD THINK OF TO REVERSE THE PROCESS...
"...TONY STARK DECIDED THEIR ONLY OPTION WAS TO TELEPORT YOU INTO THE NEGATIVE ZONE.

"BUT THEN I SHOWED UP.
"I'M NOT SAYING I'M THE SMARTEST PERSON IN THE WORLD.
"JUST THE EIGHTH.
"BUT LET'S FACE IT--FOR YEARS, STARK'S BEEN CONCENTRATING ON A THOUSAND DIFFERENT PROJECTS AT ONCE.
"ME?
"FOUR OR FIVE.
"SO I'D BEEN READY FOR THIS FOR A WHILE."
WHAT-- WHAT DID YOU DO?
TRADE SECRET, BUDDY.
COME ON--
ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW IS WHAT YOUR OWN MACHINES TELL YOU...
NO RADIATION.
NO MUTATED CELLS.
YOU'RE TOTALLY GAMMA FREE, BUDDY.
BUT YOU'RE NOT.
TING TING TING TING
YEAH...
...BUT THIS LOOKS GOOD ON ME.

AMADEUS! WAIT! WHAT ARE YOU--YOU DON'T--
I LOVE YA, BANNER. YOU KNOW THAT.
BUT YOU'VE GOT...ISSUES. A WHOLE 'NOTHER LEVEL OF ANGER.
I'M NOT POKING THAT BEAR. BUT YOU KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
ME, I'M DIFFERENT.
SO MY HULK'S DIFFERENT.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME, BANNER.
I'M GONNA GO SAVE THE WORLD, AND IT'S GONNA BE AWESOME.
YOU?
YOU'RE FINALLY FREE.
FREE?

NEVER.
I'VE BEEN "CURED" BEFORE.
AND THE HULK ALWAYS FOUND A WAY BACK.
I HAVE TO KEEP *FOCUS*.
STAY IN *CONTROL*.
TIK TIK TIK TIK
SLOW MY BREATHING.
LOWER MY HEART RATE.
PUSH DOWN THOSE ROILING EMOTIONS...
...BECAUSE NO MATTER WHAT THOSE MACHINES SAY, I CAN STILL FEEL HIM, JUST UNDER THE SKIN...
TIK TIK TIK TIK
...OR *CAN* I?


STARTED OFF JUST DRIVING.
THEN MY FOOT PRESSED A LITTLE TOO HARD ON THE GAS...
WOOOO HOOOOOOO!
...AND MY HEART JUMPED...
...SO I PRESSED HARDER...
...AND HARDER...
...AND HARDER.
AAAAAAAAAH!
I'M A LITTLE UNHINGED RIGHT NOW, AREN'T I?
BUT I DON'T CARE.
THERE'S NO MORE MONSTER IN THE DARK.
NOTHING IN THE TRUNK.
YEEEAAAAH!
I CAN'T HURT ANYONE ANY LONGER...

...EXCEPT MYSELF.
SSSSSSSSSS
OH, CRAP.
DIDN'T BRING A COMMUNICATOR.
DIDN'T EVEN BRING A WATER BOTTLE.
WHAT THE HELL'S WRONG WITH ME?
HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN WALKING?
I'M NOT THINKING...
...JUST... FEELING.
GAH!
TERROR.
PANIC.
ANGER.
OH, NO.
AND YET I'M STILL ME.
STUPID, PUNY BANNER.
HA HA HA HA!

WHOA.
HI...
GRR...
AAAGH!
AAAA HA HA HA HA!
GRRRAAAAA
AAAAAGH!

WHA...
OH, GOOD. YOU'RE AWAKE.
YOU HAD A PRETTY BAD FALL.
HOW ARE YOU FEELING, THERE?
I...UH...
AND IN OTHER NEWS...
...A BRAND-NEW HULK JUST SAVED A SHOPPING MALL IN DUBUQUE FROM A RAMPAGING PACK OF GIANT CRABS.
IT'S CHO-TIME, Y'ALL!
WE'RE STILL TRYING TO FIGURE OUT EXACTLY WHAT HE MEANS BY THAT...
SIR? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YEAH. I'M... PERFECT.
ALL RIGHT, GOOD. NOW CAN YOU TELL ME YOUR NAME?
SIR, YOU CAN'T JUST--
JANIE, NO, LET HIM GO!
HE SAID...
...HE SAID HE'S BRUCE BANNER.
OH, GOD...

OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD...
CASINO
THAT'S THE WAY, FOLKS...
"...LET'S ALL JUST STAY CALM."
HA HAAAA!
THAT'S RIGHT!
OKAY, DEAL 'EM AGAIN!
SIR...
LOOK. COUNTING CARDS ISN'T ILLEGAL. SO LET'S JUST--
HEY...
...WHERE'D EVERYBODY...
BRUCE...

...I'M NOT HERE TO FIGHT.
RIGHT.
JUST TELEPORT ME TO THE NEGATIVE ZONE?
THAT...
...THAT WAS A LAST RESORT.
AND I'M SORRY.
BUT WE'RE BEYOND THAT NOW.
I'VE JUST FINISHED CROSS-CHECKING ALL OF AMADEUS'S DATA.
HE'S RIGHT.
YOU'RE GAMMA FREE.
I KNOW.
SO YOU CAN LEAVE ME ALONE.
FINE.
JUST ANSWER ME ONE QUESTION, IF YOU DON'T MIND...
...ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL YOURSELF?

WHAT?
I'VE GOT A HUNDRED DRONES OUT THERE TRACKING YOUR STEPS BACKWARDS.
AND AS FAR AS I CAN TELL, EVER SINCE YOUR... CURE...
...YOU'VE DONE NOTHING BUT PUT YOURSELF IN TERRIBLE DANGER.
AH, COME ON.
I'M SERIOUS, BRUCE.
BREAKING DOWN IN THE DESERT, RUNNING OFF A CLIFF, TELLING THAT NURSE YOUR REAL NAME...
...AND NOW YOU'RE HERE IN VEGAS?
WHICH YOU'VE DESTROYED MULTIPLE TIMES?
SWAT
POLICE
WHERE ANY ONE OF TEN THOUSAND PEOPLE ON THE STREET MIGHT RECOGNIZE YOU AND TAKE A SHOT--
I WASN'T THINKING, THAT'S ALL! YOU DON'T KNOW--
BRUCE.
ALL THESE THINGS YOU'VE DONE...ALL THE THINGS THE HULK'S DONE OVER THE YEARS...
...THEY'RE NOT YOUR FAULT.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.
BRUCE...I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT THIS, BUT--
SHUT UP!
AND IN THAT INSTANT...
...HE KNOWS AND I KNOW...

...THAT HE'S RIGHT.
ALL THIS TIME, I'VE BEEN PUSHING IT OUT OF MY MIND.
BUT THERE IT IS.
THERE I AM.
THE MONSTER.
YOU CAN CURE ME...
...BUT THAT'LL NEVER CHANGE WHAT I'VE DONE.

BRUCE. YOU HAVE TO FORGIVE YOURSELF.
I'LL...I'LL WORK ON IT.
BUT I'VE GOT AN EVEN HARDER PROBLEM.
WHAT'S THAT?
YOU WANT ME TO DIG DEEP?
FINE.
FORGIVING YOU.
AND EVERY OTHER STUPID, PUNY HUMAN.
YOU MADE ME OPEN THE DOOR.
AND THAT WHITE-HOT FLAME OPENS UP INSIDE ME LIKE A BURNING FLOWER.
WHAT?
HIS STUPID FACE GOES BLANK.
CAN HE REALLY BE THAT SURPRISED?
IT IS MY FAULT!
I KNOW THAT! I'M NEVER GOING TO FORGET THAT!
DAMMIT. BOTTLE IT ALL BACK UP.
SLOW MY BREATHING.
LOWER MY HEART RATE...
BUT YOU PUSHED ME! AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN!
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU--
--I JUST WANTED TO BE LEFT ALONE!
BUT I CAN'T STOP.
I NEVER COULD...
BUT YOU HATED ME FROM THE BEGINNING!
YOU LIED TO ME!
YOU SHOT ME INTO SPACE!
AAAAAAARRRRGH!
...AND NO MATTER WHAT...I KNOW IN MY HEART...
...I'LL ALWAYS BE...

KTHOOOOM
AAGH!
BRUCE...
...YOU'RE RIGHT.
EVERYTHING YOU SAY IS RIGHT.
AND I'M SO SORRY.
AND IF YOU WANT A GOOD SHOT, NOW'S THE TIME TO TAKE IT.
HAA...

MY NAME IS BRUCE BANNER.
I USED TO BE THE INCREDIBLE HULK.
TO BE BRUCETINUED!

WRITE ME, AMADEUS!

Send your e-mails to MONDOMARVEL@MARVEL.COM
Make sure to mark "OKAY TO PRINT"

Dear Editors & Creative Staff of THE TOTALLY AWESOME HULK,

Long-time comic reader, first-time letter-to-the-editor writer here, and might I say, this is one heck of a great book! I've been reading Hulk stuff for a little over 10 years now, starting with the incredible PLANET HULK. So when SECRET WARS rolled around last summer, I had wondered what would become of my favorite big, green smashing machine. I was a bit fearful at first, because the Duggan/Bagley run was so good that I didn't know quite who they could put on the book that could meet that previously-established standard of quality. However, the second I heard Greg Pak was gonna be writing, that fear melted right away. I knew for a fact Mr. Pak would do an exceptional job with the book, and he absolutely has, because this mag's got it all! Great writing! Great art! Amadeus Cho! Fin Fang Foom! Best of all, STUFF GETTING SMASHED! "Cho Time" was a joy to read, and, judging by the extraordinary quality of THE TOTALLY AWESOME HULK #5, "The Hulk in the Mirror" will be, too.

From me to you, editors and creative staff of this fine book, thank you, and, as always, Make Mine Marvel!

Duston A.,
San Diego, California

Aw, Dustin…yer makin' us blush!!! Thanks for the kind words and just in case you need a Fin Fang Foom fix look no further than ALL-NEW WOLVERINE #8 and #9 (on sale now).

Thanks for taking my favorite character of all time and creating a great new storyline for him! I especially like Maddy, her dry humor is perfect. And the drone system is a great way to put her into the action. This is a very fun direction that things are going in right now. The possibilities are endless. The dream sequences from Issue #1, where Cho is driving and the Hulk is trapped in the back…AWESOME! I love how this sort of hints at the crazy, monster side of the Hulk that might get out of control again. I like the Hulk to be a little dangerous! Thanks and keep up the great work! (And B.T.W. GREAT name for the letters section!)

- Patrick Arthur O'Keeffe

We like Maddy, too, Patrick. Keep an eye on her as Mr. Pak has some interesting plans for her down the road.

I have to admit, the only reason I've bought the first three issues was so I could find out what happened to my man Banner. The Hulk was my favorite character but now, not so much. Hopefully I don't have to wait too long for Banner to turn back. The fact that Steve Rogers is gonna be turning back into Captain America soon gives me hope. It would be a lot easier to accept all these crazy changes Marvel is making if they still made comics to follow the originals for us longtime fans who don't want their favorite characters to just be abandoned. If Cho was fighting with Banner, I'd keep spending my money on it. But instead characters like Hulk, Thor, Wolverine, Captain America, and even Hawkeye are being replaced. The only reason Miles isn't hated is because we still have the original Parker Spidey to root for. It's a lot easier to back your new copies when we don't have to lose the original, way-better characters in the process. Or at a minimum, just tell us they're not gone for good. I could give them a break and spend money on these new copies if I knew it'd only be for a few months or so. But I guess I'll be reading a lot of Iron Man and Deadpool so I can keep mine Marvel!

Jon Fillman
Point Pleasant, NJ

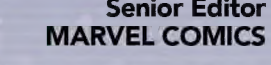
Jon, thanks for the feedback. We understand that status quo changes in any medium can ruffle some people's feathers, but it's a way of keeping things fresh and compelling and…hey…if these changes were short term they would have no resonance in the Marvel U. At the end of the day, though, it's great to see you care so much about our characters, as it speaks volumes to all the great creators who made them worth caring for.

To the Totally Awesome creative team,
Thanks so much for such a wonderful and enjoyable Hulk comic. I really liked Amadeus back in the INCREDIBLE HULK series a few years ago but my enjoyment and fandom of the character really blossomed in INCREDIBLE HERCULES. When I found out that Amadeus would be taking over as the new Hulk, I knew I would be picking up this series. It has been incredibly fun to read and the art is amazing. The best part is my two-year-old daughter enjoys reading the comic too. Hulk became one of her favorite heroes when she and I watched Hulk and the Agents of S.M.A.S.H. on Netflix. So my daughter is a current and future fan of smashing! Keep up the good work everyone and I'll see you in the comic stands!

Patrick Keely
North Carolina

Two Patricks this issue! Glad your daughter is a Hulk fan (so is mine). It's really great that male AND female readers of all ages are digging the adventures of this new Hulk. I think there's a lot to like in this series. And for all the Bruce Banner fans out there we hope you enjoyed this Bruce-centric story with beautiful art by legendary Alan Davis and Mark Farmer. Gets even better next issue!

Mark Paniccia



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